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THE OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT.

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THE controversy between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Huxley concerning the first chapter of Genesis is deeply interesting in more directions than one. In the first place, it shows that the greatest and busiest minds are not too great or too busy to give themselves to earnest study of the Bible. What a rebuke to multitudes who, great or not, certainly have no less time at their command than the statesman who leads the deliberations of a great nation at one of the most critical periods in its history. This controversy shows, in the second place, that eminent specialists may be as narrow as they are eminent, incapable of appreciating a literature whose style must necessarily differ from the style of their own particular professional literature. When such men attempt to enlighten the world upon biblical questions they are in duty bound to be on their guard lest they give expression to views shaped by prejudice rather than by "sweet reasonableness." But in the third place, we are reminded with a new emphasis; that, while "the language of the Bible is fluid, passing, and literary, not rigid, fixed, and scientific," it nevertheless harmonizes wonderfully with the general results of modern scientific investigation. By some means or other men were moved to speak as if there was an undefined anticipation of recent discoveries. On the whole the Bible seems to gain rather than lose by every attack that is made upon it.

THERE is no such thing as learning to swim until one actually plunges into the water. To know the most approved strokes in theory only will be of no practical avail. Every swimmer has had to buffet the water for himself. So no one can have any sort of biblical tact by merely reading other men's ideas about Bible-study. He himself must plunge right into that study. Though he may be utterly in the dark as to the best way to begin, still he ought to make some sort of

start. He may rest assured that in time the right procedure will open out before him. How much valuable opportunity to grow in the knowledge of the truth is sacrificed by those who are waiting to settle upon the best and most fruitful plans for reading and study. It is like refusing to eat fruit until you are certain of having arrived at the best theory of its culture. Some how or other begin to study the Word. Even though you may be in a state of vacillation as to the theory of inspiration, begin that study and go on in it until inspiration becomes a power of life rather than a form of speech. Ministers are often discouraged over the indifference to God's Word which prevails in their congregations. In a multitude of instances the indifference of the congregation is due to the minister's delay to enter upon that vigorous biblical study which he is determined to begin sometime, and which he ought to begin now.

AN APPEAL is being made for the "Egypt Exploration Fund." A great and important work in the interests of geography and history, both classical and biblical, is being done by those who have these explorations in charge. It is not work with results entirely in the future. Valuable results have already been achieved. Naucratis and Pithom (Exod. I., 11) have been identified. Discoveries of importance concerning the "land of Goshen" have been made. At Zoan there have been "discovered the broken portions of the greatest of all colossi known to man—the Monolith of Rameses II." The accounts read like fiction. For the work of the current year $8,000 will be required. Many small subscriptions, not merely a few large ones, are expected. Such a work should not go begging. Full details of the work, as well as the names of the officers and contributors, may be obtained of the Honorary Treasurer for America, Rev. W. C. Winslow, 429 Beacon street, Boston. Minister Phelps, in his remarks at the annual meeting in London, October 28th, said "that the work undertaken by this Society threw new light upon the pages of the Old Testament, and was, in his opinion, a feature of the highest importance, inasmuch as without a full understanding of the testimony of the Old Testament, it was not possible adequately to appreciate the historical position of the New.

IN nearly every denomination of Christians there is a liberal party, as well, perhaps, as a conservative party, in reference to questions which relate directly to the character, authority and inspiration of the Bible. There are always the two extremes. It would seem that our notice of "A Reasonable Faith," in the May STUDENT,

scarcely did justice to the "Society of the Friends." We subjoin a brief note received from a member of that Society. The writer of this note is one occupying a position which entitles him to speak with authority:

The notice of "A Reasonable Faith" in the May number of THE STUDENT is a very fair one. But the natural inference from it, that it represents the views of the Society of Orthodox Friends on the subject of the Atonement is very erroneous. It received almost the unanimous denunciation of the oldest and weightiest body of Friends, assembled, May, 1885, as London Yearly Meeting, which was not recorded only because the pamphlet was anonymous. The leading periodicals of the Church have also noticed it as *strongly* Unitarian in its tendencies. It contains some excellent things, mostly borrowed and misconstrued; but it is really such a chip from the block of English Unitarianism as might be used to kindle, in any evangelical denomination, slow fires, which, if they lead not directly to conflagration, may do much damage eventually.

WE have reached the end of Volume V. Our journal has grown steadily in character and influence since its first number. If it were, for any reason, to be discontinued at this time, it would have accomplished a creditable mission. If the judgment of the religious press may be relied upon, if the opinions of thousands of its readers may be accepted, to THE OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT is due, in large measure, the present revival in Old Testament study. It has, at all events, done much to encourage a wholesome study of these sacred records. But what *has* been done is trifling, if compared with what, in view of the vantage-ground it has now secured, the journal *ought* to do, and *can* do, provided it may receive the continued co-operation of those who are interested in Bible-study. No one will now think of suggesting that for such a journal there is no field. The contrary has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of all. It only remains to enter and occupy the field.

We have edited the journal as best we knew how. We have, of course, made mistakes; but experience is a grand teacher, and we confidently believe that THE STUDENT of the future will far surpass THE STUDENT of the past. We ask *your* help in this work. You *can* help us. Will you not do it?